

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF CENTRAL REFERENCE

18 April 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR:

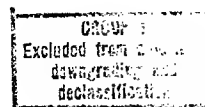
SUBJECT:                   Comments on your Memorandum of 2 April,  
                              "Revitalization of PNIOs"

1. At your suggestion, I have prepared this extension of the informal comments that I passed to you a week ago.

2. The receipt of your "Sample PNIOs" confirms my earlier reaction that the use of the present DCID 1/2, and particularly the designation "comprehensive," will in some measure defeat the purpose you have in mind. As is evident from your memo, and also from an inspection of the contents of the two lists (DCID 1/2 and 1/3), the distinction between the two is not "comprehensive" and "priority" but rather "basic and continuing" as compared with "current." Further confusion arises from the fact that the second list is more "comprehensive" (although the individual items are admittedly more specific) than the first. On the other hand, items of the highest "priority" are contained in both lists. I think that the concept of dividing the lists is good, but, in view of the history of DCID 1/2, it may be difficult to convey the idea that these objectives have the same degree of "priority" as many of the items in the list that is so designated, the real difference being that between "continuing" and "current."

3. If it is not possible, within the intent of NSCID No. 1, to provide DCID 1/2 with a new title descriptive of its proposed content, it might be better to drop this approach and divide DCID 1/3 into two lists, one "continuing or basic" and the other "current." They could both then have the caption "priority" which they, in fact, are. The introductory material should then be revised to describe the differing purposes of the two lists. If this were done, it seems to me it would still be desirable to return to DCID 1/2 and determine whether a more meaningful directive can be drafted to meet the broad purposes intended in NSCID No. 1. In the package you propose there will apparently still remain legitimate areas of "normal" research and collection which derive their authority from this DCID, inadequate as it may be.

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4. In redrafting your "basic" list, whether in a separate DCID or not, you will wish to provide some introductory statements to distinguish it from the "current" list and to provide guidance in its use for the allocation of resources. Although it appears to me to be broad enough to cover most of the priority problems of a continuing nature, it may require further elaboration to meet the planning requirements of activities such as NSA.

5. As you indicate, any division of the lists introduces some artificial aspects. I anticipate that, in your proposed arrangement, questions will immediately arise as to the relative priority of "First Priority" items in Lists A and B. There is a danger that the effect of this division will bring a result the opposite of that intended and that it will be concluded that all non-Bloc items are of a lower order of priority than Bloc items. Merely by inspection it is apparent that the items in List B. I. do not have the same degree of urgency as those in List A. I. We thus again have in fact four categories, plus a fifth, those of continuing interest. Since none of these categories is defined, those who through the years have pressed for finer definitions will want to know how the various categories differ from each other, especially in terms of the relative allocation of effort.

6. A committee, as you propose, is essential. To be really useful in resolving the problems raised by the several agencies, it must be more than the "keeper of the lists." It must bridge the gap which now exists between PNIOs and their elaboration and implementation in the areas of collection, research, and production. Your statement of mission, if you can make it stick, seems adequate for this purpose. Such a committee would need to be thoroughly familiar with the total community operation (as implied in your statement of mission and functions) and provide the USIB with guidance in the allocation of resources in relation to priority needs. Thus conceived, of course, the committee would do much more than revise the list of PNIOs or CNIOs on a semi-annual basis. Moreover, its representation would need to be broader than implied in your introductory notes where you suggest that it consist of representatives of the estimative offices of the several agencies. If the aforementioned gap is to be filled, representation will also be needed from offices concerned with the implementation of the PNIOs in the areas of research and collection. Some of this, as you suggest, can be accomplished on an ad hoc basis.

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7. Your proposal for revisions of the "current" list at six-month intervals would only partly compensate for the rapid obsolescence associated with the present list. There was some opinion in favor of more frequent reviews. Is there any reason why such a list should not be kept "current" with the issuance of changes or additions as required?

8. The foregoing comments are intended merely to focus on a few problems which may arise in adopting your proposal. I am in full agreement with the general concept of the two lists and a USIB committee as a means of revitalizing the PNICs.

cc: Mr. Borel  
Mr. Montague



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